Release
from the South Carolina Forestry Commission

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April 5 winds and tornadoes caused nearly $750K in timber damage

Emergency assistance available for landowners with storm-damaged timber in two counties

COLUMBIA—The South Carolina Forestry Commission estimates the damage to the state's timber resources from strong winds and at least eight confirmed tornadoes April 5 at $741,860.

Seven teams of foresters conducted tornado storm damage surveys covering more than 6,000 acres, surveying plots along tornado paths to assess the damage to the forest resource. The crews found that most of the surveyed areas experienced some amount of timber damage; however, SCFC officials estimate that only 315 acres were damaged so severely that they will have to be reforested.

The hardest hit counties were Allendale, Bamberg, Calhoun, Clarendon and Orangeburg. Of these, Allendale had the most forest acres damaged (3,389), while Bamberg experienced the greatest dollar-value loss at just over $380,000.

Landowners who suffered storm damage can apply for Emergency Forest Restoration Program assistance from the Farm Services Agency. FSA local offices can be located by selecting landowners' county of residence on the agency's interactive map page or by calling the state FSA office at (803) 806-3820.

"From a statewide perspective, this timber damage represents very little of the state's total timber value," said SCFC Forest Management Chief Russell Hubright. "But for those landowners who were adversely affected, the damage has a very real negative impact. So our focus right now is providing technical expertise to individual landowners and helping them access any federal financial assistance that will be available."

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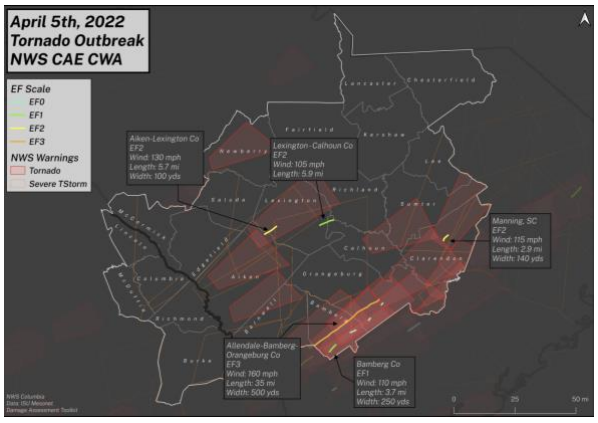
Drone photos show a tornado's track through a pine forest in Bamberg county, resulting in downed and snapped trees.



A GIS display created by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) shows the paths and strengths of the multiple tornadoes that struck the state April 5.